

Church View

By Arthur Church



Success for Blues is good for tourism

THERE was a time not so long ago when the soccer season ended as April came off the calendar and was not with us again until September.

Not so now, as even the completely disinterested will know. In the short interim period of our cricketing summer there are televised football games from other parts of the world, while news and speculation concerning soccer and its increasingly grasping 'stars' are never absent from the sports pages of all our newspapers.

There are those who, over the years, have wondered why we football fans are happy to don our heaviest attire and shiver in often bitterly cold winds, at Adams Park, home of Wycombe Wanderers, or to whatever ground we fancy when we might do so in more clement weather.

The point may be well made, but not easily answered. If, like me, you were there on Saturday last you would have a better idea of the why and wherefore. The players may well have been pounds lighter after their 90 minutes of heatwave struggle.

I've read recently that the idea of an altered season is being considered by those with power to amend it. But with the vagaries of our homeland weather I can't see that they could act with any success.

Our weather is largely unpre-

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dictable, so it might be best to leave reasonably well alone.

Depending how each of us reacts to heat or cold there have been widely varying opinions about the hot weather we have been experiencing in the last week or so. Speaking for myself, you can have it, but count me out.

A nice, bright sunny day is one thing but moving suddenly into the 90s with little or no breeze is quite another. All very well if one could sit in air-cooled conditions with iced drink ready to hand. Otherwise, stuff it!

I see that sports commentator Alan Parry, a director of Wycombe Wanderers, hoping to find the Blues at the other end of the league table this season - as do we all - had some thoughts in the programme about Wycombe District Council's attitude to the club. It's better now, he says, than for some years but he obviously feels there's room for improvement.

I've wondered about this because the council, in some spheres, seems anxious about the town's image. It wants to attract industry and shops and to encourage more visitors. Surely the publicity from a successful football club should mean it gives the Blues every encouragement.

Unthinkingly, they appear in the past decade or so not to have seen the merit of this, and have indeed cost the club much-needed money. As the Wanderers strive to progress they should have the council on their side. Well-directed balls at Adams Park will be a lot more useful to the town than those concrete balls in the High Street.

One councillor of my acquaintance, not a soccer enthusiast, even questioned why the team is not composed of local lads. The time has gone when, as amateurs in an entirely different world, members of the team worked in the factories during the week and played for Wycombe on Saturdays.

If the Blues tried that now they would be appearing in some minor Sunday league. And, much as we might like to see really local talent, the prospect is more than a little remote.

When players come to Wycombe they are welcomed as part of our team and when they take the field in a Blues' shirt they represent not just the club but the town - which should give them full backing. After all, councillors don't have to be born here to represent us - though perhaps it helps.

Time please gent

LAWRIE Sanchez has called time on pub team triallist Andy Kinsey.

He decided against the 20-year-old striker after seeing him in the reserves at Hayes and Thame.

Sanchez said: "He showed some nice touches and held the ball up well but I'm looking for players who are ready to go straight into my first team. I was quite impressed though and I wouldn't mind seeing what the rest of his pub team are like."

The other two triallists - Spaniard Jordi who came through chairman Ivor Beeks' Rotary Club connections, and Matt Lawrence's university pal Neil Myles - have also been sent home.

Mum's the word

JENNY Emblen is sweating on son Paul being recalled to the team for Tuesday's Worthington Cup first round first leg match at home to brother Neal's Wolves.

Emblen is suspended tomorrow and his mum is desperate to see her sons on opposite sides.

She said: "I want Paul to score but I don't want him to mug Neal."

Mrs Emblen will be at the tie and is a good luck charm to both.

She saw Paul score against Forest and then repeated the trick on Sunday when her presence at Molineux spurred Neal into scoring against Tottenham.

● The away leg on August 24 is all-ticket for Blues fans.

Beeton returns

ALAN Beeton returned to Adams Park yesterday for the first time since he contracted meningitis and he should be in the stands watching tomorrow's game.

Dad Alan said: "He's raring to go, he looks well but it'll take time before he's back to how he was."

Cheeky Clarets

BURNLEY got short shrift when they cheekily asked Wanderers to send them videos of their pre-match campaign so they could plot Blues downfall. Wanderers didn't oblige.

Boss on the box

FANS can relive Lawrie Sanchez's finest hour on Wednesday night when Sky Sports re-run the 1988 FA Cup Final when Sanchez scored Wimbledon's winner against Liverpool.

Aylesbury moved

LAST Wednesday's friendly at Aylesbury was re-arranged to next Wednesday because Blues did not want to risk picking up any injuries for tomorrow.

Fitness test

INDIAN mascot Comanche faces a race to be fit for Burnley's visit tomorrow after suffering a cracked base.

Westie's back

MARK Westhead is back in training after his achilles injury.